

Eli's sons needed discipline, but he pampered them instead. This cost him his life, and eventually cost the family the priesthood. (Missler)

Chapter 3

v.1 The Jewish Historian Josephus places Samuel's age here at 12 years old.

“The Word of the LORD was rare.” “During the entire period of the judges, apart from the prophet of 2.27-36, we are told of only two prophets—Judges 4.4 (Deborah) and 6.8 (Call of Gideon)—and five revelations” (NIV)

“The expression ‘the word of Yahweh’, functions in Israelite literature as a technical designation for an oracle or revealed message.” (McCarter)

Application (v.1): Consecrate yourself to the Lord

- Becoming a Christian is like a marriage commitment
- In what ways have you consecrated yourself (set yourself apart) for the Lord?
- How could you do so to a greater degree? What might you be willing to commit to beginning today?

Application (vv.2-3): Place yourself in the Lord's Presence

- Literally—Physical surroundings
- Through your Time & Attention (*especially in prayer*)
- By reading Scripture
- When, where or with whom have you felt most in the Lord's presence? What were you doing at the time?
- What is your soul currently feeding on (mind—will—emotions)?

v.4 Samuel heard but didn't understand

v.7 “Did not yet know the LORD” (*cf.* Exodus 1.8). “How important it is for those who are raised in Christian homes to make their own personal decisions for Christ.” (Missler)

Application (vv.4-9): Seek Guidance

- None of us have perfect judgment
- Who has been the voice of God for you in your life? Who has given you the truest counsel? (A spiritual director?)

Application (v.10): *Be open to Hear and Obey*

- Expect God to speak to you—listen
- Be completely obedient
- Can you think of an instance where you were obedient to the Lord in a very small thing, and that proved to be an unexpected blessing? How about in a very significant thing?

“The person who surrenders to the Lord and is willing to listen will always learn God’s will. Eli had disobeyed the Lord and put his family first, so Gd could not speak directly to him.” (Missler)

v.13 Sins of omission

v.19 “letting none of his words fall to the ground.” “The Hebrew expression denotes ‘letting nothing he said be ineffective’ or ‘letting nothing he said prove false.’” (McCarter)

v.20 “the prophetic history presents the office as all-embracing. Samuel the prophet is also priest, warrior, judge and governor.” (McCarter)

“The present passage can be grouped with Isaiah 6.1-8; Jerimiah 1.4-10; Ezekiel 1.1-3.16 and the other prophetic call narratives.” (McCarter)

“God speaks to children and young people, and adults should make it easy for them to hear God’s voice and respond in faith.” (Missler)